

ALASKA COUNCIL ON EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
MINUTES
April 18, 2002

Call to Order

Chairman Charlie Lean called the spring meeting of the Governor's Alaska Council on Emergency Medical Services to order at 9:02 a.m. ACEMS members Don Hudson, DO, Steven D. O'Connor, MICP, Karen O'Neill, MD, FACEP, and Debra McCarty, EMT-II were unable to attend.

Welcome and Introductions

ACEMS Members in Attendance:

Charles Lean, EMT-I, Chairman
Ken Brown, MD
Daniel Cox, EMT-III
David Hull, MICP
Dorothy Jones
Barb Simonsen, RN

State Section of Community Health and EMS Staff in Attendance:

Mark S. Johnson, Chief
Matt Anderson, EMS Unit Manager
Karen Lawfer, Health Program Manager
Kathy McLeron, Public Health Specialist
Martha Moore, Injury Surveillance and Prevention Manager/Public Health Specialist
Zoann Murphy, Health and Social Services Planner
Shelley K. Owens, Health Program Manager
Doreen Risley, Public Health Specialist
Judy Skagerberg, Grants Administrator
Alice Walters, Health Program Manager

EMS Regional Staff in Attendance:

Troy Dolge, EMS Administrator, Copper River EMS
Tom Fazzini, Director, Injury Control/EMS Medical Services, Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation
Sue Hecks, EMS Coordinator, Kenai Peninsula, Southern Region EMS Council, Inc.
Daniel Johnson, Executive Director, Interior Region EMS Council, Inc.
David LeBaron, Outgoing EMS Administrator, Copper River EMS
Bobbi Leichty, Executive Director, Southeast Region EMS Council, Inc.
Aggie Lie, EMS Director, Maniilaq Association
Debbie McCravey, Finance Manager, Southern Region EMS Council, Inc.
Dave Potashnick, EMS Regional Coordinator, North Slope Borough Fire Department
Skip Richards, EMS Coordinator, Chugachmiut
Teresa Seybert, EMS Sub-Area Coordinator, Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation
Teresa Stone, EMS Coordinator, Kodiak Area Native Association
Ronni Sullivan, Executive Director, Southern Region EMS Council, Inc.

Liaison Representative Members in Attendance:

Yuancie Lee, Research Analyst, Alaska Highway Safety Office, AKDOT&PF

Liaison representatives Steve Floerchinger, MD, Lt. Col. Chuck Foster, Robert LaPointe, Frank Sacco, MD, and the State Medical Director were unable to be present. A quorum of the Council was present.

Approval of Agenda

Matt Anderson asked that time be included in the agenda for a presentation by DOT&PF Headquarters Planning about Intelligent Transportation Systems. It was agreed to add this time on Friday afternoon.

MOTION: To adopt the agenda for April 18 and 19 as revised.

(Dan Cox, Ken Brown)

Action: The motion was approved.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the October 4 and 5, 2001 meeting.

(Dan Cox, Ken Brown)

ACTION: The motion was approved.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES, TASK FORCES, AND WORKING GROUPS

Executive Committee Report (Charlie Lean)

The terms of two ACEMS members were not renewed because of a finding by the Alaska Attorney General's office that there is a potential financial conflict of interest in their leadership of regional EMS organizations that receive grant awards which are reviewed by ACEMS. Boards and Commission rules state that no member may derive a benefit from activities discussed by the Board. The rules also prevent a member from simply recusing himself from such a discussion. Gratitude was expressed for the years of valuable contribution by Terry Bunes and Terry Stone. ACEMS hopes to continue receiving their input. Dave Hull, who was appointed to replace Terry Bunes, has been involved in EMS since its early days in Alaska.

CHEMS Section Report (Mark Johnson)

Tobacco settlement money has enabled CHEMS to add a new tobacco unit and unit manager. Tobacco enforcement is focusing on vendor compliance efforts. The five units in CHEMS are administrative, primary care/rural health, tobacco, health promotion, and emergency medical services/injury prevention and control. Primary care/rural health has had an influx of \$6 million; this unit works with EMS in rural areas, focusing on areas having midlevel or no service. The State Office of Rural Health and rural hospital flexibility grants are active in these areas also.

The FAA granted Alaska \$10 million for airport lighting improvements. The projects will be part of the DOT aviation 5-year timetable which includes runway, helicopter and emergency deployment lighting. It is important to have the input of air medical and emergency medical services to the plan.

EMS Program Report (Matt Anderson)

Matt thanked Mark, a great boss, the excellent, creative EMS team in CHEMS and the valuable help from the regional EMS offices. EMS training is in revision now. The air medical service regulations are 17 years old and need strengthening, clarification, and consistency with new national standards and rotary and fixed wing differences. For instance, the regulations require pressurized aircraft, but how it this interpreted in the field? Mark stated that the level of capability is not apparent from the certificate and the focus is on regulating recognized and advertised air medical services, not all operators. CHEMS doesn't want to apply the regulations to volunteer actions of other non air-medical service providers.

The ACEMS Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Committee helped develop the homeland security budget. A grant application for \$6.4 million was submitted in April for Health Resources Services Agency (HRSA) funds through the Center for Disease Control. The grant focus areas are epidemiology, public health laboratories, the Health Alert Network, risk communications, and education and training. Initially, it was hoped CHEMS could bring EMS regions in, but this proved hard to do so the application was written with CHEMS at the lead at this point. It is hoped that recurring funds will be distributed to the regions. New FEMA funds will be distributed through the ADES First Class system. CHEMS is

working on a statewide mass casualty response plan, with levels of response for communities. Recommendations include: 1) standardizing the start triage system throughout Alaska; 2) getting all EMS agencies up to speed on the incident command system; 3) working with hospitals to develop a continuity of communications between pre-hospital and hospital situations; and 4) early notification of ADES. There is much to be learned about response capabilities from the anthrax hoaxes. FEMA funds are providing law enforcement personal protective equipment and the development of two Level A teams (Juneau and Valdez). The Legislature believes that new WMD funds can be used to supplement other funds to small services in Alaska, but this is not true.

Other activities: The Code Blue project has been very challenging: dealing with some of the funding requirements is complex, and the regional directors have been very tenacious and hard working. The USDA has announced funds for next year. Lots of big-ticket items were purchased this year, such as radio equipment. The Fairbanks Symposium was great, especially the talk on geriatrics. The Sitka Symposium was super, with its focus on cold injuries. The findings will be written up this summer and distributed. The Bioterrorism Resource Guide is being rewritten; Shelley Owens is updating the cruise ship pamphlet; the EMS web site is being changed and improved; and two new databases for course approval are going online. Funding the poison control hotline will be an issue. A revised goals document is in the works this summer.

Legislation; House and Senate Budgets for EMS (Mark Johnson and Matt Anderson)

Matt discussed legislation regarding non-profit organizations, Do Not Resuscitate, and AEDs. The concern with SB 325, the AED public access bill, stems from risk management issues about immunity from civil liability. Questions have arisen regarding the degree of access and training for use. Senator Robin Taylor has raised objections to the bill, and it is held up in committee. Municipalities' concern with risks may be perceived rather than actual. It was suggested that ACEMS help educate the legislature about misperceptions in the next session by fleshing out the issues and being ready to address objections. It would also help to talk as a group to risk managers in the interim. Matt suggested requesting an Attorney General's opinion after we have done our homework. The perception is that the law attempts to absolve the organization that installs the AED from all liability. The other issue is, what liability exists if an AED is not provided?

Shelley Owens worked with Representative Bill Hudson's office on HB 197, a bill to allow persons to designate individuals to make end-of-life decisions when the patient is not able to do so and to specify the decisions the designee can make on the patient's behalf. Early drafts of the bill would have effectively repealed the Comfort One provisions, and Shelley's goal was to get Comfort One back into law.

Mark summarized the legislative budget. The Senate cut funds dramatically in the operating budget, based on a ceiling and the fate of the capital budget is not yet known. ACEMS needs to help the legislature understand the consequences of this action. The impact statement handed out contains the specifics, showing potentially disastrous consequences. The Conference Committee is considering the budgets from the two chambers. Sue Heck mentioned that the regional directors and coordinators have developed an impact statement, which they've been distributing. Proposed cuts to municipalities and boroughs are also a concern. It is important for the EMS community to stay unified and not find points of competition for funds. Once funds are lost and services suffer, it is hard to build them back, and small, rural services cost dollars.

Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (Matt Anderson)

The purpose of this program is to integrate EMS and rural health care; to integrate EMS with rural hospital coalitions; and to develop networks. Ronni just returned from an RHF conference and observed that rural hospital program people understand EMS, but hospital administrators from small communities seem less aware. Rural AED training and support will be discussed with the RHF policy administrators. There is \$10 million available nationwide for this grant program; the granting agency wants evidence of

coalitions and partnerships. Alaska has good coalitions in place and is well-positioned to apply for the grant in the short timeframe available. Partnerships between rural areas and municipalities are important. Matt suggested that if we get federal funding for the rural AEDs we may be able to use state funds for urban areas.

Alaska Trauma Registry Report (Martha Moore)

The Trauma Registry is working well. The data provider goes to hospitals and collects the data, does validation studies, and visits registrars. The data is complete through 2000, with most of 2001 in as well. The software was changed in midstream due to a breakdown. The new system will provide quarterly reports and concurrent reports on transports. There is a bill which has been introduced which rescinds the requirement for a snowmachine operator to have a driver's license; annually 40 children under age 16 are hospitalized due to snowmachine operation –down to age five. Poison control is having success and booster seat usage is up.

Persons to Be Heard (Charles Lean)

Representative Sharon Cissna from Anchorage District 21 was present and described her interest in affordable healthcare. Dr. Ken Brown suggested writing a letter to the editor of the Juneau paper as the medical director of the Capital City fire department, stating his concern about budget cuts to state and regional EMS which seriously compromise delivery of emergency medical services to the state. He asked if could refer to his ACEMS membership and following discussion, it was agreed that he could state his views as a private person and a doctor and mention his membership on ACEMS. Representative Cissna said that the budget cuts are only the beginning; this will be a yearly event until additional revenues are found. Public support can make a difference; the average person doesn't realize the potential impact of the cuts. Ronni mentioned a bill that would afford some health care insurance to non-profits. Rep. Cissna said it is stuck in the Labor and Commerce Committee, and that she would send an information page to ACEMS. Matt said that the 501(c)(3) status of some regional EMS offices is an integral part of Alaska EMS framework.

State Symposium Planning; EMS for Children (Doreen Risley)

The statewide EMS Symposium will be November 13-16 at the Egan Convention Center in Anchorage. The Alaska Native EMS grant was extended to January 2003; the EMSC Partnership grant is in its third and final year; a new grant is expected next year. Current EMS for Children projects include: funding an ear imaging conference for rural audiologists; assisting ANMC in the expansion of the emergency care website; programming for the Alaska Public Health Training Network; pediatric technical assistance team (TAT) visits; Pediatric Education for Pre-Hospital Providers (PEPP) courses; a revised medevac course; funding travel for ANMC rural medical preceptorship participants; and a supplemental trauma survey.

Regional Directors and Coordinators Report (Sue Hecks)

RD&C had a very productive meeting on Tuesday. Bobbi, Dan, Ronni, and Terry Bunes took part in EMS Day at the Legislature, which was a success. Terry Stone helped formulate the talking points and impact statements. It's important to understand the legislative process so each region can be more effective in dealing with the legislature. Perhaps this would be a good Symposium topic. The draft bylaws will be voted on at the Fall ACEMS meeting. The money from the Alaska EMS Association, which no longer functions, remains at Interior region; \$1700 went to PIE for education. The EMS in Crisis document hasn't been updated since 1998; RD&C will update it at the Fall ACEMS meeting.

Injury Prevention Update (Martha Moore)

Martha described the duties of the injury prevention staff. Zoann Murphy has the poison control program now that Raj Maskay is working in the Primary Care/Rural Health Unit. There will be an injury prevention course for 3 ½ days in June, providing the theory and basics of injury prevention (IP). IP has a bag of tools for injury prevention to take into homes and share. Other areas of IP focus include: Safe

Kids and youth snowmachine safety; implementing the 5-year grant for smoke alarms; and putting the Kids Don't Float program at more sites.

EMS Training Committee Report (Kathy McLeron)

The revised EMS regulations are at the Department of Law and will go to the Lt. Governor for signature. Guidelines for cold injuries were reviewed by experts at the Sitka Symposium, and trauma updates were discussed. HRSA grant update: a mini technical assistance team visit is scheduled for May in Juneau; five doctors were sent to Tucson in January for medical directors' training; EMD training is scheduled for Juneau; instructor workshops are planned; and fire training is being procured through a reimbursable services agreement. Seven Community Health Aides went to Anchorage for a training preceptorship. Kathy thanked the regional EMS councils for their help in accomplishing these activities.

PIE Report (Skip Richards)

Gary Judd put a lot of time, resources, and energy into PIE posters and projects. Skip suggested developing a small, light, portable plaque to honor deceased EMS providers. Perhaps ACEMS could select the awardees, after developing selection criteria, e.g., line of duty. A web site memorial was also discussed. The poster for EMS Day at the Legislature is outdated; a new map with regions and BRUs is needed, with the star of life, a legend, the 14 goals, and a place for pictures. PIE also discussed a banner for state functions with an EMS message. The names poster was a success at Symposium; paramedics were added to the poster.

Planning Task Force (Matt Anderson)

The planning task force didn't meet.

Hospital Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) (Alice Rarig)

Alice Rarig, manager of the Public Health Data and Evaluation Unit, tracked HIPAA while on the CHEMS' staff and at DEU, until a Department coordinator was hired. The target is April 2003 to implement primary rules. Providers will need to have policies in place. There are some staff training implications. HIPAA deals with electronic data transmission standards; data storage, use, and transmission. HIPAA defines public health providers in new ways; there are hybrid entities, health care entities, covered entities. The business associates category may pertain to regional EMS offices. A health care clearinghouse needs to have clear agreements with providers. Policies on data collection for qualify assurance must be clear so that patients can be told with whom data is shared. EMS currently uses implied consent; HIPAA requires explicit, stated consent. Matt remarked that this discussion was very timely. CHEMS needs to be able to respond to questions from ambulance services and others who collect data, and there are many questions about implementation of this legislation. Alice suggested going to the HIPAA web site at the link through the DHSS home page: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/das/is/hipaa/>.

Interior Region EMS Report (Dan Johnson)

(This is an agenda change; moved up from 4/19.) Code Blue has been a major effort and challenging to work with a variety of funding sources and bureaucracies. The Region should have all of the 1.3 million obligated by 30 June. More capital equipment requests are awaiting review. He has a strategic plan for the Region with a revised mission statement and measurable objectives, and will notify ACEMS when it is on the web. Services are unfortunately reduced when funding is flat; there is no fat in the organization, and some functions are not being done. Pediatric village assessments are very rewarding; it's a great program. Dan and Dave Rockney performed them along with a retired pediatrician, and Doreen Risley accompanied one trip. Charlie said that Nome attendees benefited from the Interior Region Symposium. He also thanked Dan for good work on the ambulance bids.

Wrap Up and Recess

The end of the agenda for day was reached and Charlie suggested a recess to 4/19.

ALASKA COUNCIL ON EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
MINUTES
April 19, 2002

Call to Order (Charles Lean)

Chairman Charlie Lean called the second day of the spring meeting of the Governor's Alaska Council on Emergency Medical Services to order at 9:07 a.m.

Other New Business (Charles Lean)

The ACEMS packet contains a report from the Alaska Division of Emergency Services, describing disasters all over the state.

Dave Hull met with Bill Thomas of the resolutions committee of Tlingit and Haida Central Council (TCCC), and would like to pursue their support of EMS funding. TCCC is sensitive to small community issues and will be impacted by budget cuts to EMS. Dave presented a draft resolution opposing EMS cuts for presentation to TCCC. A discussion followed with suggestions for changes in language, additions, and clarification of intent of language. ACEMS agreed philosophically with the idea and plan, keeping in mind that ACEMS is a statewide group and TCCC a regional one. It was suggested that the information be kept general and conceptual rather than attempting specificity with facts and figures, especially since TCCC is not familiar with EMS budgets, core programs, and projects. Dave stated that although TCCC is regional, their actions influence others in the state. It was suggested that Dave take the impact statement prepared by the RD&C showing the potential statewide impacts of budget cuts to TCCC with the draft resolution. A discussion of how ACEMS can do more to influence opinion on EMS funding statewide will take place later in the day.

REGIONAL EMS REPORTS AND GRANTS PRESENTATIONS

Southern Region (Ronni Sullivan).

It was a very productive year. The staff is great, and the sub-region coordinators are very much in touch, which makes the job easier and the regional staff's efforts more effective. Paula Anderson is a new half-time staff member who has hit the ground running. Code Blue continues to be a driving force, with specifications written for ambulances and approved by the USDA. TAT visits to Unalaska and Sand Point provided an opportunity for learning communities' needs and working with complex issues; these visits are rewarding. The TAT helps local staff set priorities, and outsiders see things differently from those who are working in there every day. The budget is tight; the grant doesn't pay for everything, and the region has pressed its ability to generate grant income.

Southeast Region (Bobbi Leichthy)

The staff is stable and very good and the regional office is starting an injury prevention program. It has opened ambulance bids and will be reviewing and making an award, hopefully the second week in May. The ETT text revision should be ready by September, with a written curriculum as well. The ETT instructor course will also undergo a revision supported by HRSA grant training money. Symposium was extremely well attended and the evaluations were very positive. The panel of presenters was excellent. Bobbi thanked Matt and Doreen for financial support of symposium. Next year's theme will be climbing, diving and crush injuries. Scholarships and mini grants are important to this effort and are jeopardized if funds shrink.

North Slope Borough EMS (Dave Potashnick)

Dave, the new regional coordinator, is a physician's assistant and paramedic with law enforcement and fire fighting background. Dan Cox is now a full-time EMS instructor. The perception of the North Slope Borough as a sufficiently funded area is no longer a valid one; there have been large cuts, including cuts

to staff, over several years. It is a large region, not on the road system, with seven villages in addition to Barrow. Community Health Aides serve as part of the EMS team in villages.

Matt said he hoped that the Borough would be able to continue its programs in the face of shrinking budgets and without additional staff. Dave said his indirect rate is 19%, which contrasts with 49.1% in Chugachmiut and 33% at Southern Region. He asked if certifying officers could be viewed as statewide resources, and Matt responded that they are currently viewed as regional assets, but that may change.

Maniilaq Association (Aggie Lie)

Code Blue activities are moving along. They've worked on bids for snowmachines and four-wheelers. 2001 was a big year for recertification, with 1,000 students from basic to advanced levels. Staffing is at 100%. Activities included health fairs in the area and development of a curriculum with the Red Cross for remote Alaska first aid (shelter building, ice rescue). Aggie said snowmachine safety and injury prevention training is always needed. There will be an arctic police drivers' course in May.

Congratulations were extended to Aggie for winning a national award.

Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation EMS (Tom Fazzini)

Tom previously worked in environmental health, and is now Injury Prevention and EMS director for YKHC. Blending the two departments is challenging. He has a very good staff, including four EMS instructors. The 48 villages in the Bethel region are divided among the instructors. Basic ETT was taught to the Community Health Aides. The staff must consider how best to balance training needs and manage the workload in the face of impending budget cuts. The fire injury prevention project is installing smoke detectors, with house-to-house visits scheduled in six more villages.

Discussion followed about the relationship and integration of EMS, injury prevention, and fire departments in villages. It was mentioned that the Community Health Aide is often the only trained person in the village.

Norton Sound EMS

Mike Owens was unable to get out of Nome, so there was no report.

Completion of New Business

Dave Hull returned from Tlingit-Haida Central Council. The impact statement and draft resolution were very enthusiastically received.

Membership status (Charles Lean)

Since Dave Hull is filling a consumer position on ACEMS, there is apparently a vacant ACEMS pre-hospital position. Three people have expressed an interest in this position, and all are now being considered. Charlie said it would be possible, but not likely, for either Dave or him to be appointed to that pre-hospital provider position, rather than the consumer positions they currently fill. He opened the floor to suggestions for filling the vacancy. Matt said that Boards and Commissions sometimes contacts CHEMS on these appointments, but not always.

Charlie reminded the group that both Barb and he are serving their second and last consecutive terms as officers. The terms of Karen O'Neill and Don Hudson end in November 2002 and both have stated their continued interest. Barb stated that since a scant quorum of ACEMS was present, perhaps elections should wait for the fall meeting.

MOTION: To place ACEMS membership election on the fall agenda.

(Barb Simonson, Dorothy Jones)

ACTION: The motion was approved.

MOTION: To write a letter to the Governor in support of continuing Karen O'Neill and Don Hudson.
(Dan Cox, Barb Simonson)

ACTION: The motion was approved.
Shelley will let them know that they have to reapply.

Appointments to Task Forces and Committees (Charles Lean)

MOTION: To appoint Dave Potashnick and State EMS Medical Director Ken Zafren to the EMS Training Committee.

(Barb Simonsen, Dan Cox)

ACTION: The motion was approved.

There must be one consumer member on the Bylaws committee. Dave Hull is willing. Barb Simonson also expressed an interest in serving on this committee.

MOTION: To appoint Dave Hull and Barb Simonsen to the Bylaws committee.

(Ken Brown, Dorothy Jones)

ACTION: The motion was approved.

MOTION: To appoint Paula Anderson to the Public Information and Education Task Force and remove Gary Judd from it.

(Dave Hull, Ken Brown)

ACTION: The motion was approved.

Barb suggested that ACEMS needs a sub-group to study the issues concerning implementation of the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and report back to ACEMS. Matt suggested that a small group identify a model policy and report back to him for further development. The group could take a year to review, filter, distill, and share information.

MOTION: To form a HIPAA Ad Hoc Committee with the following members: Dave Hull, Dan Cox, Barb Simonson, Shelley Owens.

(Ken Brown, Dorothy Jones)

ACTION: The motion was approved.

Barb asked whether ACEMS really needs a Weapons of Mass Destruction Task Force. Matt said that the HRSA and CDC grants that drive the programs and funding don't make room for a group like ACEMS to participate. Barb reminded ACEMS that the WMD task force will expire in November if it is not reappointed. Charlie observed that the Air Medical Services Task Force was not polled on the airport lighting issue.

GRANTS TO REGIONS (Matt Anderson)

This is the second year (continuation year) of the grants cycle. ACEMS can no longer be the evaluation committee for these grants and CHEMS will do an internal staff review for compliance and make recommendations. Proposals were verified for programmatic issues; the quality of the proposals has improved. They represent the core functions of EMS, the meat and potatoes. The recommendation is to fund these to the level available. Charlie stated that he feels the quarterly reports are useful; will reports still be sent to ACEMS even if ACEMS is not functioning as the PEC? Matt suggested ACEMS members give the regions their email addresses to receive electronic copies of the quarterly reports.

Liaison Member Representative Report

Yuancie Lee, Liaison Representative from the Highway Safety Officer of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities distributed copies of the revised 12-200 form, Alaska Motor Vehicle Collision Report, an electronic report form which can be electronically transmitted by police departments to the Division of Motor Vehicles and DOT, reducing paperwork. The form provides timely geographic

and demographic data. Martha Moore gets extracts through the trauma registry system. Mark Johnson mentioned that this links accident and injury data. Barb stated that this system supplies some data that is currently missing in injury prevention work, and might result in policy changes by the local road agency or police department. David LeBaron remarked that this could help at the local level because it gives real data, for example, about a given age group. The form is being tested in Anchorage and there is a manual with a data dictionary to assist in filling it out the form, which takes about 45 minutes.

Budget

A discussion took place concerning how to respond to possible EMS budget cuts. ACEMS thanked Sue and the RD&C for their work on this. Sue stated that the impact statement and bullets had been distributed to the legislature, and personal visits had been made. Charlie said it also needs to be pointed out that federal funds do not provide the operating money for Alaska EMS. Mark said ACEMS could state its support of the Governor's recommendations for EMS. Ken Brown suggested drafting a statement supporting the EMS recommendations as they stand without cuts, due to the expected impacts of cuts. A resolution was recommended because it does not need to be directed at any particular audience.

MOTION: That the Chair draft a strongly-worded resolution opposing any operational or capital cuts to CHEMS, the Regions, or the Multi-Program Native Organization Grants (MPNOGs) (former designated BRUs).

(Dave Hull, Ken Brown)

ACTION: The motion was approved.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) (Jill Sullivan, AK DOT&PF)

Jill Sullivan, ITS/Iways Coordinator with the Statewide Planning Division of the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, provided an informative overview of ITS, now known as Iways. This is a multimodal system that applies integrated technologies and information systems to make travel more safe and convenient. Travel communication is a big focus. Projects include: Road Weather Information Systems (RWIS), which provides data (shared with other agencies) on road conditions; the AMHS ferry tracking system (real-time source of arrival and schedule information); Commercial Vehicle operations (safe, efficient freight movement, including Hazmat tracking; Land Mobile Radio System; Maintenance Management System for highways; Bridge Scour Monitoring; and the Alaska Traveler Information System (real-time travel information source), using 511, the National Traveler Information number. A voice-activated 511 system will be implemented in Alaska starting in December 2002, and will include: public transportation; ferry schedules; road weather, maintenance, and traffic closures; airlines, and, eventually, hotel, attractions, destination, among other items. Jill gave a demonstration of the Conditions Acquisition and Reporting System (CARS), a web-managed database produced by several states as a pooled project under federal funding rules, which acquires information about highway system closures, restrictions, and emergencies and reports real-time information to users, operators, police and emergency personnel. It is available to any Alaska public agency for a one-time license/user fee. Each department can set its own security for users and access. Alaska will be customizing CARS to track ferry position and schedule impacts and track Hazmat loads for security purposes.

Matt thanked Jill for a very informative presentation, and said that EMS must be poised to participate with: 1) Mayday (new data elements); 2) CARS (track ambulances, operations); and 3) public information.

Budget, continued

Charlie provided the ACEMS resolution: "Resolution of the Governor's Alaska Council on Emergency Medical Services Opposing Any Cuts to Emergency Medical Services' Operating or Capital Funding."

MOTION: To accept the resolution as amended.

(Dan Cox, Dave Hull)

ACTION: The motion was approved.

Cold weather video

A video on cold weather/cold water rescue was shown.

Agenda for Fall ACEMS Meeting

Items for the fall meeting include: 1) election of officers; 2) resetting of priorities based on budget outcomes; and 3) the next grants, which are due in early April and are written starting in January.

In response to Barb's question will ACEMS be affected by budget cuts to state EMS, the reply was that there will be a fall ACEMS meeting, regardless. Dave Hull suggested Politics 101 be presented at the meeting so that ACEMS members are ready for the next legislative session. Matt suggested that 1) the legislative process be taught (Ronni and Sue are good resources), and 2) the development of templates and resolutions. The spring meeting is the most legislatively active and good information flows both ways. Matt said he will email information about budget actions as it is available.

Select dates for next meeting

Thursday and Friday, October 3 and 4, were selected as dates for the next ACEMS meeting, with the Regional Directors and Coordinators meeting on Tuesday, October 1 and a workshop on Wednesday, October 2 for updating EMS in Crisis. Additionally, the By-Laws, Planning Committee, and PIE will meet. HIPAA will meet if necessary.

Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn.

(Barb Simonson, Charlie Lean)

ACTION: The motion was approved.

Charlie adjourned the regular session of ACEMS at approximately 2 pm.